

# Latvia as a Summer Festival Destination to Finnish Tourists

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## Latvia as a Summer Festival Destination to Finnish Tourists

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The subject of the Bachelor's thesis is Latvia as a Summer Festival Destination to Finnish tourists. The aim of this thesis is to find out if Latvia is known for its summer Festivals and how to improve their marketing. Marketing, social media and mobile applications are important promotion for the festivals. Three of the biggest and well known Latvian summer festivals were chosen as Positivus, Summer Sound and Laba Daba. All of the festivals offer wide range of local and international artists as well as there are many different sports, entertaining, creative activities. All three festivals are longer than one day, which lead to consider what kind of amenities festival can offer.

The theoretical framework includes destination management, tourism in a nutshell, event tourism, marketing and e-commerce, as well as basic facts and history about Latvia and Finland. Each of the chosen summer festivals have been described. Tourism in general is a wide concept, a few definitions have been given and one of the tourism niche - event tourism - social, economic, environmental, cultural wellbeing on society has been discussed.

In the empirical part a survey has been conducted. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in the survey. The questionnaire was available online and only Finnish respondents took part in the survey as their opinion was the most important. The theory of the research methods have been explained at the beginning of the chapter as well as an analysis of the survey has been given at the end.

According to the results of the survey Latvia is not known for its summer festivals to Finnish tourists, in fact most of the respondents do not know much about Latvia as a country itself. The biggest reason is lack of marketing. As technologies develop fast, festivals should be marketed more on the social media, namely Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. In the survey, respondents mentioned that visual marketing is very important if one wants to attract visitors, which proves that responsible person should pay bigger attention to the design and structure of the webpages. In the conclusion suggestions have been given off what should be improved on the festival webpages as well as suggestions of how Finnish tourists in easier and more convenient way could visit Latvian festivals and see the country itself.

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## 1 Introduction

According to Douglas, Douglas & Derrett (2001, 356) in literature festivals are defined as themed public celebrations. They can include celebrations of sporting pursuits, food and agriculture, festivals of music and art, religious festivals, carnivals. Otherwise, the celebration may involve a ceremony of that brings people together to honour the work of an individual.

Festivals and events are now an important and productive area of tourism research enquiry. People in all cultures have the need to escape from everyday routine for joint creativity and celebration. (Jamal & Robinson 2009, 485). Nowadays many young people choose to spend their summer holidays by attending festivals. Festivals have occupied significant status as part of organised domestic and international mass tourism, to the level that can clearly be recognized as “festival tourism”. Festivals, as highly organized events, have been included into the stock of ‘products’ that tourists desire. (Picard & Robinson, 2006, 2)

The author chose Latvia as a Summer Festival Destination to Finnish Tourists because of her background by being from Latvia herself and spending her study years in Finland and deep interest in summer music festivals, furthermore, author has visited one of the festivals herself which gave an idea of the thesis topic. Three biggest Latvian summer festivals were chosen to research: Positivus, Summer Sound and Laba Daba festivals. A description of festivals has been given; moreover e-mails have been sent to the festival organisers in order to get the statistics of foreign visitors at the music festival.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods have been used in the thesis.

The aim of this thesis is to find out how familiar Finnish tourists are with Latvian summer music festivals and give examples of how to market them towards Finnish market.

To reach the answers to these questions, two research questions were formalised:

1. Is Latvia known for its summer festivals to Finnish tourists?
2. How to improve the marketing of Latvian festivals to Finnish tourists?

In the research part, first the theory of the research methods has been given. A survey was created in online web-site, the results of the questioner has been given in the next part and analysis of music festivals webpages and social media (Facebook) has described in the last research part.

## 2 Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Destination Management

There can be many definitions for the term ‘destination’ from different perspective. According to United Nations World Trade organization (UNWTO) a tourist destination is an important place visited by tourists which represents the basic unit of analysis in tourism. According to Morrison, destination management involves coordinated and integrated management of the destination mix: attractions and events, facilities, transportation, infrastructure and hospitality resources. (Morrison 2013, 5; WTO 2015.)

The role of the destination management is to make a balance, to manage and support the combination of different actions; Improve resident’s quality of life, create products for a specific market segments, preserve local resources, promote sustainable development, gain/maintain competitiveness on the market and ensure tourists quality of visit (Figure 1). Destination management is accomplished through specialized organizations, known as destination management organizations (DMOs). (Manente 2014 3; Morrison 2013, 5). From the tourist point of view, tourists can establish different ideas of the destination according to his/her decision process, their expectations and their level of satisfaction. The decision of the destination depends on ones’ culture, system of values, socio-economic status, benefits one can receive from the destination and the perception of the destination, so tourist destination can be seen as a tourist product that in certain markets competes with other products. (Manente 2014, 6)



Figure 1. The main objectives of the destination management approach. (Manente 2014, 5.)

It is important for the destination to be “managed”, because Tourism industry is very competitive and destinations have to give the best value to tourists in order to ensure local benefits and sustainability. Through the visit, tourists are affected by many services and experiences starting from private sectors and ending by interaction with the locals. (UNWTO 2007, 9) As mouth-to-mouth marketing is very effective it is important to make a good impression to the visitors.

## 2.2 Tourism in a Nutshell

Tourism and hospitality is one of the largest components of the global economy (Baum & Mumdambi 2005, 1) and one cannot define it with a single definition as there are many definitions given. Definition given by (World Tourism Organization) UNWTO is “Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes ” (UNWTO 2015).

Another definition of tourism is given “The field of research on human and business activities associated with one or more aspects of the temporary movement of persons away from their immediate home communities and daily work environments for business, pleasure and personal reasons” (Page 2007, 12). From historical point of view “Tourism is often considered to be a twentieth - century phenomenon, yet literature exists which describes travel for purposes other than trade, warfare and exploration, as an activity of ancient times. Both ancient Greek and Roman citizens travelled to sporting events, festivals and sites of archaeological interests” (Faulkner, Moscardo & Laws 2000, 22)

As shown in the Figure 2, Tourism activities are divided into two parts - Mass Tourism and Niche Tourism. In this chapter author will concentrate more about niche tourism, more precisely - event tourism.

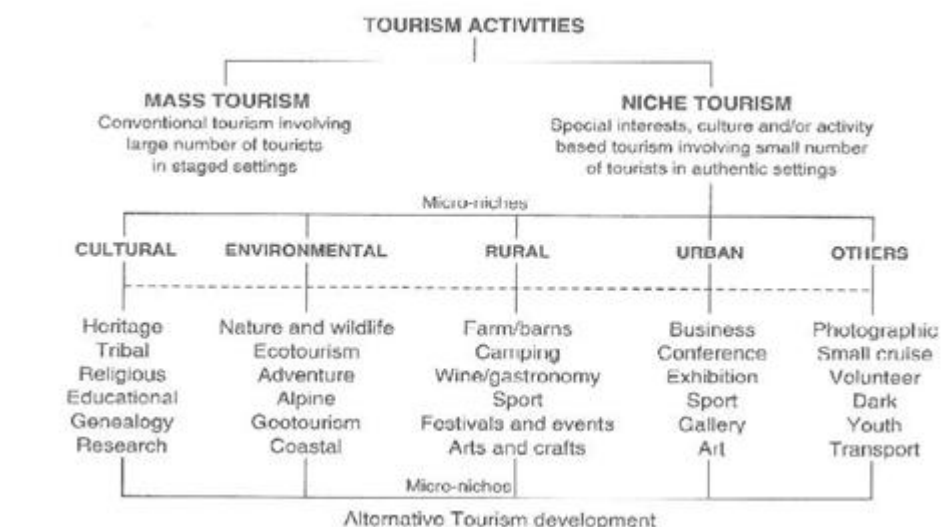


Figure 2. Niche Tourism Components. (Novelli 2005, 9)

### 2.3 Event Tourism

Events are seen as an important motivator in tourism, and as an effective improvement of destination image. The common motivation for attending a festival is leisure, entertainment, relaxation and socialising with others. People tend to escape from routine and pressure of everyday life which is another reason to visit a festival or another city, country. Observation and participation is also a motivator to attend an event. It is an opportunity to see different cultures, crafts, environments. For a short time tourists become a part of another culture or community. Socialising is an important human need. People attend festivals and events to be part of a group, meet with friends, get new contacts and be with others who enjoy themselves. (Douglas & al. 2001, 360)

Festivals have impacts on the social, cultural, political and economic wellbeing of society. There can be positive and also negative impact. In the economic impact financial practicality is a major concern for organisers and investors, since the economic outcome can be a deciding factor if the festival will continue in the future.

A big focus of festivals and events are attracting visitors and tourist who spend money in the town or region, which creates a range of economic benefits including income for organisers and local businesses, employment and salaries for local residents, increased business, investment opportunities and government revenue.

A negative impact can be seen in the host community. Local residents have to live up with increased prices and there can be an opportunity cost from hosting events if resources are



directed into infrastructure for the event at the expense of services and facilities that are needed to community. Also, unprofessional management can be a negative impact as many community events use large numbers of unskilled volunteers. The economic success of the event can be fragile, as if, for example, it starts to pouring rain, crowd attendance could be affected. (Douglas & al. 2001 364-365)

Another impact is environmental damage; it can take the form of soils, plants and animals through squashing, erosion, vandalism, pollution of land and water. Furthermore, the degradation of heritage areas valuable to the local community and society can occur. Although it is common to focus on negative impact if talking about environment, festivals and events can also have positive impact. Growing concern of the natural environment has encouraged improving the development of the environmental issues, such as recycling, effective waste management and crowd control. Events can also be a promoter for improvements in outdoor recreation facilities, providing greater amenity and enjoyment for visitors and locals. These facilities remain after the festival and provide improved outdoor places and spaces. (Douglas & al. 2001, 366)

Festivals and events are primarily celebrations. They provide opportunity to learn about other cultures, customs and ways of life, and encourage greater understanding and tolerance of cultural diversity. If not carefully managed, commoditisation of cultures can be a major issue. The concern is that the traditions, uniqueness and real significance of these festivals for local people are sacrificed through their commercialisation. Tourists should be encouraged to appreciate and admire culture and cultural festivals and attractions in their original form. Tourism can be used as a vehicle to preserve cultures and cultural heritage. Cultural integrity must take priority over economic gain or satisfying tourists' needs. (Douglas & al. 2001 368)

## 2.4 Basics Information of Marketing

All of us are daily the targets of massive and continuous marketing activity in a variety of forms which range from advertising on television, radio, in the press, posters and nowadays more and more on internet. (Middleton, Fyall, Morgan, Ranchhod 2009, 22). The key aspect of marketing is making a decision from a customer point of view; these decisions will be focused on what the customer needs and wants. For a destination marketer it requires focusing on a customer. Know who you want to target, what needs the customer have and provide the necessary products/services in order to get the expected experience. To know your competitor - to be able to identify who your competitors are, to see their weaknesses and strengths. To coordinate all marketing efforts with other functions within the organization - marketing should not be separate function within the organization, there should be a communication

with finance, manufacturing, customer service and other fields, market orientation - this strategy helps to improve the overall performance and increases companies' value to its customers. (Seaton, Bennett 1996, 7; Fojt 2005, 3). As mentioned at the beginning one of the marketing forms is advertising on internet, furthermore nowadays almost everyone owns a mobile phone with several applications, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on.

## 2.5 E-Commerce

Kenneth, Laudon and Guercio defines that e-commerce is "the use of the Internet, the Web and apps to transact business. More formally, digitally enabled commercial transactions between and among organizations and individuals." In other words e-commerce refers to the things one buys and sale of goods or services via electronic channels. Nowadays everyone can make a website, attracting users to individuals or company's website is the purpose of marketing, once a consumer is at the website, the sales process begins. The impression one will get from the website will eventually determine whether the consumer will make a purchase or return to other sites. A result of an experimental study based on 2,600 participants, top three main credibility factors in website were design look, information design/structure and information focus. (Kenneth & al. 2013, 513)

Over the years e-commerce as well as other technologies has evolved, especially mobile devices and mobile commerce has become its own market. With the rise of sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, social media has become an important part of e-commerce. According to Kenneth & al. there are 1 billion Facebook members, 140 million active Twitter users and more than 140 million people who have joined LinkedIn. (Business News 2015; Keneth & al. 2013, 479)

Social media differs from traditional print and other media by people sharing information themselves to others, the idea is not to contact the million viewers directly, but to let them do it on their own.

### 3 Latvia and Finland

Latvia's and Finland's relationships begun when Finland recognised Latvia in de facto on 23.09.1919 and de jure on 26.01.1921 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Finland 2015). Latvia and Finland share the Baltic Sea and is a part of the Baltic Sea Cooperation which aim is to solve problems faced by the region and to develop safe living conditions for the citizens (Embassy of Finland in Riga 2015). Both of the countries are in European Union. Both of the countries are on EU top with the highest forest covers and with the freshest water. (Latvian Institute 2015)

Although the countries are not far from each other there is a lack of knowledge from both sides, not even mentioning the festivals in each country.

In the next chapters author has described Latvia and Finland briefly, for the reader to get to know geographical and historical information which has made the both countries as they are nowadays.

#### 3.1 Latvia Briefly

Latvia is a small country with area of 64 589 sq. km located in North of Europe, shore of the Baltic Sea. The country shares border with Estonia, Russia, Lithuania and Belarus. The population is 2 274 700, where half of the people live in the capital - Riga, which makes it the biggest city of Latvia (Dubinš, 2006, 3). The official language is Latvian and currency since year 2014 is euro (EUR). Latvia is independent since 1991, 18<sup>th</sup> of November and is a Parliamentary democracy. The country is divided into four regions - Western Latvia (Kurzeme), Southern Latvia (Zemgale), Northern Latvia (Vidzeme) and Eastern Latvia (Latgale) where each of them are different with its landscape and cultural heritage. (Latvian Institute, 2015)

Latvia has a strategic geographical position, which provoked its more powerful neighbours to gain control over the region during the course of the history. By the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, Latvia's trade route up the Daugava River was increasingly visited by merchants from Western Europe. The Teutonic Knights, German warrior monks, who first arrived in 1200, were looking for conquest as well as new converts in a pagan land. In year 1201, they founded Rīga which grew into an important centre for trade between the Baltic region and Western Europe. (Eyewitness Travel Guide 2011, 134)

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, during the Livonian war, Poland conquered south part of Latvia and Catholicism was established, while in other part of the country, belonged to Germans, Protestantism was declared. (Eyewitness Travel Guide 2011, 134) The differences in religion can be seen nowadays where in the south part of Latvia majority of people are still Catholics and religion tourism plays a big role into the tourism destinations.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century during the great Northern War, Russian Empire occupied Rīga and introduced 200 years of stability, while other parts of Latvia were still under the Germans. However towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Russians attempted to replace German with Russian as the national language. (Eyewitness Travel Guide 2011, 135)

When the World War I broke out in 1914, Latvia became the main battleground between Germany and Russia. Many Latvians were forced to join the Russian army, where as a result fathers and sons had to fight against each other. In 1915 Latvians were permitted to form their own army, during the Battle of Christmas Latvians were fighting against Germans, however they were defeated and Germans captured Rīga. However the Allied victory in 1918 forced Germans to withdraw and within few days on 18 November Latvian independence was declared. (Eyewitness Travel Guide 2011, 135)

Many achievements were accomplished during the independence - trade was re-directed westwards and away from Russia, the Latvian language was used throughout the country and Rīga became the Baltic Region's capital. The independence continued until 1940 June 17, when Soviet Union invaded and made Latvia a part of the USSR. Anyone who had played a significant role in "bourgeois" Latvia was either executed or deported to Siberia. A year later the German invasion followed. The Nazi regime was as brutal, but with different targets - most of its victims were from Jewish community. Russians did not surrender and returned to conquer Latvia again; this enabled nearly 100,000 Latvians to escape to Germany and Sweden, from where many continued on to Britain, Canada and Australia. (Eyewitness Travel Guide 2011, 136)

By 1990, half of the population was Russian-speaking and there was a serious threat that Latvian would disappear as the national language. The first protest took place in 1987, when a crowd gathered around the Freedom Monument in Rīga, to commemorate the 1941 deportations to Siberia. Many political groups began to emerge and the most forceful of them demanded full independence and won the elections in 1990. In year 1991 Latvia finally got its independence. (Eyewitness Travel Guide 2011, 136)

### 3.2 Festivals in Latvia

There are various festivals which take place in Latvia every year - classical, traditional, popular, sports, food and so forth. In this chapter three biggest summer festivals have been chosen that are more popular for younger generation and are more known in Latvia and to foreign public. The festivals are as follow: "Positivus", "Summer Sound" and "Laba Daba". Basic information as well as some statistics and overall observation is given.

### 3.2.1 “Positivus”

Positivus started in year 2007 and now it has become the biggest festival not only in Latvia, but in the whole Baltics. According to festivals' webpage this year festival welcomed 30 000 visitors. (Positivus, 2015)

The festival takes place in the coastal town of Salacgrīva next to the sea and in the middle of woods. “Positivus” is famous with its relaxing and positive atmosphere. The festival is 3 days long, majority of the visitors stay in the festivals camping site, but there is also a possibility to go with your own camper or sleep in some city's hotel. Festival offers rich diversity of local and international artists, as well as art and dance stages giving the festival goers a variety of activities during the three-day festival. Positivus was also recognised at the 2013 European Festival Awards as the “Best European Line Up” and “Best medium Sized Festival”. It is also in various summer festival tops. (Positivus, 2015)

Moreover the author has visited this festival and has no doubt that it is the best festival in Latvia for various music tastes and activities and for its friendly atmosphere.

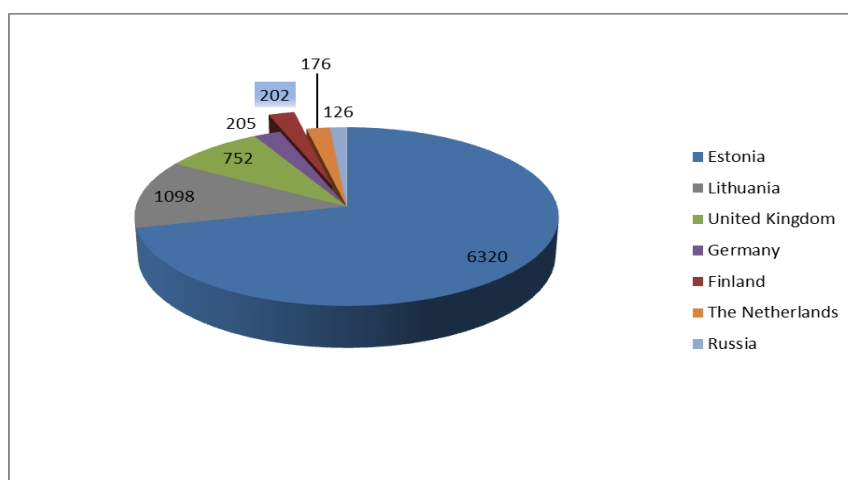


Figure 3. The amount of foreign visitors by country in year 2014 (Positivus 2015)

As shown in Figure 3 The most foreign visitors to Positivus festival in 2014 were from Estonia - 6320, this could be explained due to the fact that Estonian border is near by the festival location, Lithuania follow with 1090 visitors, United Kingdom with 752 visitors, Germany with 205, **Finland** with 202, The Netherlands with 176 and Russia with 126 visitors and few from some other countries. To find out the statistics, emails have been sent to the festival organisers and they replied that the data has not been collected yet for the year 2015, but the statistics are very similar to the previous year. (Positivus, 2015)

### 3.2.2 “Summer Sound”

The festival started in year 2011. It is located in the West part of Latvia in the city called Liepāja. This festival is famous because most of the stages are located on the sand - at the seaside. The festival is two days long and the participants can sleep at the camping site, or with their own campers or in city's hotel. In this festival more local musicians can be seen, but in last years also foreign musicians have participated. The festival is more visited by younger generation as the music is more dance style, party style. Summer sound offers variety of events, such as “Colour run”, Cēsu alus Air Guitar, where the winner gets to the championship which is happening in Finland, Oulu, the “Sea celebration” and “Power of the beach”. These different events attract even more people not just to the music festival itself. (Summer Sound, 2015)

Summer Sound also has been nominated as the Best Medium Sized festival in European Festival Awards 2015.

There are no specific statistics of foreign visitors in the Summer Sound festival, the author did not get a response from the organizers, however, according to the published information on festivals webpage, there were around 25 000 thousand visitors on both festival days, including foreigners in year 2015. (Summer Sound, 2015)

### 3.2.3 “Laba Daba”

Laba Daba in translation means “Good nature”, which is the main goal for the festival - to create a good atmosphere for the people and nature. The festival is always characterized by a welcoming attitude towards people, events and nature. Laba Daba is friendly to families which can be seen at the festival territory. As the festival is two days long, visitors have a special camping area, furthermore, families have separated sleeping area, which is calmer, or there is a hotel nearby the festival area. (Pareizā Ķīmiņa, 2013)

Laba Daba takes place in a Gaujas National Park's territory - Līgatne, which gives the festival more environmental feeling as the nature is preserved, therefore that is how they differ from other festivals. Seems like the festival has a special feeling in the air as in this year there were three couples who got married during the festival. (Pareizā Ķīmiņa, 2013)

An email has been sent to the organisers of the festival in order to get to know statistics about the visitors of festival, and they replied that they do not have a special statistics with foreigners; the organiser stated that the statistics is based on observations. According to the

organizers the foreigners amounts around 1/5 from the total amount. There is no official information on the number of visitors, however, according to their website it was more than 10 000 in year 2014. (Pareizā Ķīmija, 2013)

### 3.3 Finland Briefly

Finland, with area 338,440 km<sup>2</sup>, is the fifth-largest country in Western Europe. Located in the Northern Europe with population of 5.4 million people, of which 1.4 million live in the Metropolitan area. The capital city is Helsinki. Finland share borders with Sweden to the West, Norway to the North, Russia to the East and Estonia to the South across the Gulf of Finland. The official language is Finnish and currency euro (EUR). Finland got independent on December 6, 1917 and is a Parliamentary Democracy. (Finland Promotion Board, 2015)

Finland's history can be divided into three chapters: the Swedish period till 1809, the Russian period from 1809 till 1917 and the independent period from 1917 till present.

As a consequence of Swedish domination, the Swedish legal and social system took root in Finland. Martin Luther King started the reformation and in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century also reached Sweden and Finland. And the Catholic Church lost out to the Lutheran faith. The reformation made a big rise in the Finnish-language culture; the New Testament was translated in Finnish language and later on in 1642 the whole Bible appeared in Finnish. During the Swedish rule period, it extended its power around the Baltic and managed to push the Finnish boarder further east. The Swedish rule was extended to Finland in 17<sup>th</sup> century, as Swedes were often appointed to high offices in Finland it strengthen the Swedish language there. (Finland Promotion Board, 2015)

Sweden lost to the war against Russia in 1808 - 1809 and Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy. The Grand Duke was the Russian Emperor - Alexander I. The Duke gave Finland extensive autonomy, thereby creating the Finnish state and in 1812, Helsinki was made the capital city. In 1863 Finnish became an official administrative language by the initiative of Alexander II, although only one-seventh of the Finnish population spoke Swedish as its first language, Swedish remain its dominant position until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A Russification started during 1899-1905 and continued 1909-1917. During the first era of oppression a new legislative body was created, which turned out as the most radical parliamentary reform in Europe. Because of this reform Finnish women were the first in Europe to gain the vote in the parliamentary elections. (Finland Promotion Board, 2015)

On December 6, 1917 Parliament approved the declaration of independence. At the same time the parties of the left and right had become opposing. At the end of January 1918, the

left parties staged a coupe and the government was forced to leave from Helsinki. The Civil War ended in May by a victory over the government troops led by General Gustaf Mannerheim. Finland became a republic in summer of 1919 and the first president was elected - K.J. Ståhlberg. Later on March 13, 1940 when the "Winter War" ended and south eastern Finland was given to Soviet Union. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union, Finland entered the war as a cobelligerent to Germany. The war ended in truce in September 1944 and Marshal Mannerheim was made a president of the republic. Over the years many political occasions happened, which made Finland the country as it is nowadays: A member of European Union and NATO since 2004, top performer in numerous statistics, such as high standards of education, social security and healthcare, equal human rights. (Finland Promotion Board, 2015)

#### 4 Research Methods and Conduction

There are two research methods used in this Bachelor's thesis - qualitative and quantitative. The theoretical part for both of the methods has been explained in the next subdivisions. In order to find out how familiar Finnish tourists are with Latvian Summer Music Festivals, an online survey was conducted where both of the research methods were used. The survey was created in an online web-page [www.surveypal.com](http://www.surveypal.com) and shared in social media (Facebook). The respondents were mainly from authors own personal contacts aged from 21 to 27. There were in total 25 respondents. The analysis of the survey is described in the next chapter.

Before starting the research, the researcher should focus on the research question, then the accessibility of the data and whether the data is or is not quantified (Jha 2008, 44).

##### 4.1 Qualitative Approach

A qualitative research has a general meaning or a general definition. According to Jha, qualitative data is a description of situations, events, people, interaction, attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, people's experience, observed behaviours of particular population. Qualitative research can help to better understand and interpreter the real situation. There are three most common qualitative methods: Participant observation - for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviour, in-depth interviews - collecting individuals personal experiences and histories, this method is used for more sensitive topics and focus groups - for collecting a general overview of issues concerning cultural groups or sub-groups. (Northeastern University, 2015)

In this Bachelor's thesis the third qualitative method has been used - focus groups as the idea was to get Finnish people's opinion and knowledge of Latvian Summer Music Festivals.



Focus group is an informal discussion among a group of selected people about a particular topic. The strength of the focus group method is that the researcher gets different opinions from the participants as everyone sees reality in a different way. (Sage Publications, 2010)

As the technologies develop fast, virtual focus groups is a new way of qualitative research. The most attractive aspect that the virtual focus groups offer is that it reduces the time and money on the research fieldwork, the ability to bring people together from different geographical areas, a complete record of the discussion and a total anonymity of the participants. (Sage Publications, 2010)

There is also a negative aspect from virtual focus groups. The critic claims that the method is not as valuable as face-to-face research; it misses the important information from the non-verbal communication and reactions between the respondents and the researcher which has a negative impact on quality and depth of data. Also, because of the anonymity, one can never be sure of whom he or she claims to be. (Bruggen, 2009, 364)

#### 4.2 Quantitative Approach

Quantitative method is commonly associated with numbers and statistics. According to Sage Publication definition, quantitative research is “Explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)”. In order to get the necessary data, the question has to be asked in particular way from which researcher can get the statistics. In quantitative method one cannot analyse attitudes and beliefs, however the question can be put in a way that researcher can get the required data, for example, a question where the participants have to rate a number of statements as “agree strongly”, “agree”, “disagree”, “disagree strongly”. Nowadays, analysing the data is easy as increasingly people are using online sources for the research where the data is evaluated automatically. (Sage Publications, 2010)

Both research methods have been combined so that the results would be more appropriate. In the next chapter an analysis of the questionnaire is given, first qualitative, then quantitative approach.

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Experience of Music Festivals

The first question was to find out if the respondents have been to a summer music festival - 73.7% have been to a festival, while other 26.3% have not attended a festival.

None of the respondents have been to festival in Latvia which makes a 100% of "No".

On the question why do they attend music festivals most of the answers were to see the bands, have fun with friends, because of the atmosphere, as well as two respondents replied that they do not like festivals because of the crowd.

### 5.2 Marketing of the Festivals

On the third question - where the respondents search for the information - everyone replied that online is the place where they usually look, also 3 respondents mentioned that friends and families opinion is important for them.

On the question - what kind of marketing is attractive to them, the answers were different, few of the respondent mentioned that a design is important for them - something funny, memorable, trendy and good looking. Marketing on social media - Facebook and Instagram is also effective. Television commercials and ads on the streets are also important to one respondent.

Next question was if the marketing was the problem on lack of information about Latvian festivals, where most of the respondents agreed that marketing could be the problem. Respondents said that there is basically no information about Latvian festivals, even more, respondents are not familiar with Latvia as a country itself. Also, distance and competition with Finnish festivals is a problem why they have not paid attention to festivals in Latvia. One respondent mentioned that for Finns Latvia is not very popular destination which is the reason why they do not look for festivals in Latvia at the first place.

### 5.3 Reasons and suggestions of visiting a festival in Latvia

On the question what is the reason not to visit a festival in Latvia is the lack of information, the distance and the finance was also mentioned by few respondents.

One of the questions was a suggestion if there would be a transport that goes to and back the festival, if they would consider to go, 8 respondents said "yes" with comments like if the price would be reasonable and the line-up was good in the festival, other respondents said "maybe", if the festival would be cheaper than in Finland and travelling comfortable, one respondent said that transportation is not the main thing, it depends on the artists. On the

last question, if there is something else they would consider for going to Latvia to a festival, two of respondents mentioned that location, as they would want to stay in a hotel, the ticket cost, the bands, and to see the country itself.

The 10<sup>th</sup> question was an informative, few of the respondents commented that from all the festivals Summer Sound seems interesting, as well as Positivus could be a good festival.

#### 5.4 Knowledge about Latvia and Latvian Music Festivals and vice-versa

According to the results of the survey, many respondents mentioned that they do not know much about Latvian festivals and Latvia in general. A small survey has been made and questions were asked to Latvians from authors personal contacts in order to find out what they know about Finnish festivals or what it reminds when hearing word Finland. The responses were: Helsinki, the land of lakes or forests, Lapland and Santa Claus, ice-hockey or many just said that do not know anything about Finland. Only one respondent could tell something about Finnish festivals, more precisely, Pori Jazz Festival, as the person has visited the festival.

#### 5.5 Analysis of the web-pages and social media

As a conclusion from the survey, most of the respondents answered that they have a lack of information about Latvia, furthermore no information about Latvian festivals. A big impact nowadays is e-marketing; almost all the respondents said that they search for information online. In this chapter the author will take a look into festivals web-pages and social media profiles.

In order to evaluate the web-pages effectiveness, guidelines from Management Centre International Limited were used. There are 10 criteria: The First Impressions, Navigation, Content, Attractors, Findability, Making Contact, Browser Compatibility, Knowledge of Users, User Satisfaction and Other Useful Information. (Management Centre International Limited, 2015)

##### 5.5.1 "Positivus"

At the first look the "Positivus" front page looks professional and well designed. The URL address is short and simple - [www.positivusfestival.com](http://www.positivusfestival.com). The first page is easy to read, not too full with the text. On the first page one can see the important information - the dates, the location, links where one can buy tickets, when the user scrolls down, one can find news

and artists that have participated through the years. At the end of the page there are all the sponsors listed which gives the user the feeling of trust, especially if they are known companies, as in this festival: Lattelecom, Coca-Cola and others and supported by Nordea, Tuborg and others. On the sides of the first page there are links on social media where the users can share the information - Facebook, Twitter, Draugiem.lv, Instagram, Pinterest and so on. If the webpage has caught users' eye, one can go to other sections and read more about news, see the store, line up, general information for visitors, see the festival areas, read about the festival and take a look at the previous year's pictures and videos.

The author put an informational question in the survey and links to festivals homepages and some of the respondents commented that "Positivus gave a wonderful first impression". The navigation of the webpage is understandable, the return home page button however can be a bit confusing as there is not a "home" icon, but a number, however it is logical to find it. There is no search engine, as the webpage is not that big and one can easily find the necessary information.

The contents of the web page is easily readable, the texts are not too long and complex. The webpage has a lot of graphics, which adds value to the webpage and makes it more interesting. The content is up-to-date as the first thing that can be noticed when entering the website is that the tickets are on sale and that there are 269 days left till the next festival. The festival webpage is available only in Latvian and English, which is a minus, if they want to make the festival more international. In the section "for visitors" one can find FAQ's and under "about festival" section one can find reviews of the festival, which is a useful and trustworthy impression.

The festival had a special offer at the beginning of October - only for 3 days tickets were in much cheaper price, which is another way of how to attract people.

It is easy to find "Positivus" festival on the internet search engine, as the name of the festival is memorable, and with few keywords it is easy to find it. Also when the festival is approaching, Facebook is an active marketer and posts a countdown to the festival. As the festival approaches, the organizers announce the last main stages performers in order to keep the audience intrigued. Marketing on TV, radio and different printed marketing is actively used. The festival contacts are under the section "about positivus", the contacts consist of the address and e-mail list for payments and technical support, press/media inquiries and questions and suggestions. There is no telephone number mentioned.

The website uses the "shopping cart" for buying the ticket, it stays there even if one wants to pay later for the purchase.



Illustration 1. "Positivus" front web-page (positivusfestival.com)

In the "Positivus" Facebook page the main thing one can notice is the voting for the European Festival Award. If one scroll down the page, there are photos and videos from previous festivals, link to webpage, a special separate section for buying ticket, which leads directly to the webpage ticket section, Newsletters, festivals location on the map. There is a section "about" where one can read a small description of the festival and some contact information, including phone number. Very useful are the reviews in the side of the page, where people comment their thoughts and experiences of the festival.

The page is only in English language. There are more than 42 thousand likes of the page and more than 19 thousand people have pointed that they "have been" at the festival location.



Illustration 2. "Positivus" Facebook page (www.facebook.com)

### 5.5.2 ‘Summer Sound’

The Summer Sound official webpage on the first glance looks a bit empty as there is a white background. But when one takes a deeper look, the webpage is easy, but professional, not too colourful with light design, because of this it is easy to find and read the context of the page. Most of the participants of the survey commented on the informative question that they would like to visit Summer Sound festival.

The URL address is also simple and easy to find in the search engine - [www.summersound.lv](http://www.summersound.lv). At the top of the page, there are the dates of the festival and the name of the city where the festival is located. Also on the first glance, one can see graphic with the bands that have already participated in the festival and the link where to buy the tickets. On the top there are section to news, general information about festival, line-up, section for visitors for practical matters, and activities during the festival. When scroll down, one can read news, however the news are not up-to-date, as in this case the last news were on 10<sup>th</sup> of July, 2015. On the side of the page there is a ‘‘tweets’’ from Twitter, which are about some bands not the festival in general. On social media the festival is only active in Facebook, [draugiem.lv](http://draugiem.lv) and Twitter. On the side there are also the 3 biggest supporters - LMT, Cēsu alus and the city - Liepāja. At the bottom of the page there are other sponsors and supporters mentioned.

In this webpage as it was in ‘‘Positivus’’ there is also no ‘‘home’’ icon, but as well can be logically find by pressing on the logo of Summer Sound, which takes you to the first page. There is also no search engine as it is easy to find all the necessary information.

The first thing one should notice is when entering the website the language is Latvian, so it takes a second glance to look for the language change, the webpage is also translated in English and Russian language. The context is easy to read in all three languages. A big minus is that there is no translation in English or Russian about the activities of the festival. Under the section ‘‘festival’’ one can find the contact details an address is mentioned, e-mail for media, for campers and sponsor and advertisement e-mails are mentioned, but no telephone number is mentioned in the webpage. Under the section ‘‘for visitors’’ one can find FAQ’s which consists of questions and answers about the practical matters of the festival.

The festival is marketed beforehand not only in social media but also on printed advertisements, TV and radio.

There is a link ‘‘get your tickets here’’ that automatically takes you to a webpage that sells tickets to different events.



Illustration 3. "Summer Sound" front web-page (www.summersound.lv)

"Summer Sounds" Facebook page is more active than the webpage. The news are up-to-date and constantly there are some shared articles about the city itself. There is address of the festival, link to the webpage and telephone number, but no general information about the festival. There are more than 10 thousand "likes" on the page and more than 4 thousand have been "checked-in" at the festival. There are also a reviews and visitor comments.



Illustration 4. "Summer Sound" Facebook page (www.facebook.com)

### 5.5.3 “Laba Daba”

From all three website “Laba Daba” is the most unimpressive one. Especially if one goes straight to the English version of the page, it differs from the Latvian version, which is a bit more aesthetic. There is no Russian or any other language translation of the web-page. The URL address is easy to remember and find - [www.labadaba.lv](http://www.labadaba.lv). On the Latvian version the first thing that pops up is the slide-show of the pictures from the festival and the dates of the festival, while in the English version there is a video as well as the dates. The English version of the web-page looks a bit unfinished; the information of the festival is at the bottom unlike in the Latvian version which is on the side. From the survey one person commented that Laba Daba web-page looks boring and do not tell much. When scroll down, there are several sections - artists, philosophy, how to get to the festival, archive, info and for companies section. There is no “home” button as in the two other festival websites, however in this one there is a Latvian word “sākums” which means the beginning, otherwise one has to press on the English flag, otherwise it will take back to the Latvian version. Also in the English version there are no supporters mentioned, only in the Latvian one. Also the social-media is shown only in the Latvian version.

The contact details are under the section “info”, there is a phone number given, e-mail if interested in music and e-mail for media.

There is not much of a text to read in the webpage - the philosophy has been explained, which is clear and understandable, shared some information, artists who have visited the festival. From the web-page seems that the organisers are not that much into attracting foreigners.

The last up-to-date was made in 10<sup>th</sup> of October in the News section in the Latvian version. There are no graphics, animation or sound which makes the web-page unattractive.

There is no FAQ section in the English version, in Latvian there is a forum where everyone can post comments.

Laba Daba has a special offer to companies - to organize a corporate event in the framework of the festival, which is an interesting and unseen idea.

It is also easy to find this festival on the internet; however for non-Latvian speaker it can be a bit difficult to remember the name of the festival.

In both versions there is no information about where to buy tickets; in order to get one should use [www.google.lv](http://www.google.lv).





Illustration 5. "Laba Daba" front web-page ([www.labadaba.lv/eng](http://www.labadaba.lv/eng))

Laba Daba Facebook page seems more up-to-date than the web-page. There are some feed-backs from the festival organizers as well as some videos and just some shared articles, all the posts are written in Latvian. There is no information in English about the festival, there is mentioned the webpage of the festival and a contact number as well as the address of the festivals location. The page has almost 5 thousand "likes" and more than 1 thousand people have "checked-in" at the festival. As other Facebook pages there are comments and reviews of the festival.



Illustration 6. "Laba Daba" Facebook page ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com))

## 6 Conclusions and Development Ideas

The main objective of this Bachelor thesis was to find out if Latvia is known for its Summer Festivals to Finnish tourists. Towards finding this information qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. In qualitative method a lot of theory was read about destination management, tourism, events, marketing, as well as basic facts and history about Latvia and Finland. In quantitative and qualitative research author made a survey, the participants were only Finnish as their opinion was the most important, moreover small survey to Latvians were made to get to know their opinion about Finland. E-mails were sent to the festival organizers in order to find out statistics of the foreign visitors at the festival. Furthermore author learned how to analyse a web-page, what is the most important thing on what should organizers concentrate in order to make the web-page attractive.

Festival wise, Latvia might not be the first place where to look. There are bigger countries with bigger festivals, bigger line-ups, but also with higher ticket costs, less safe and longer distance. According to survey Latvia is not known as a Summer Festival Destination to Finnish tourists, even more, there is a lack of information about the country itself. Latvian summer festivals have been visited by many good bands as well as there are different activities that happen during the festivals.

The biggest obstacle is marketing; the organizers should make something unique in order to attract visitors from other countries, in this case Finland. The distance between Latvia and Finland is not that big and visiting a festival can be a reason to also visit the country and vice versa. Festivals in Latvia will definitely be cheaper and all the expenses less than if one would visit a festival in home country.

As the technologies develop fast, the most effective and fastest marketing could be through social media - Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram as well as mobile applications. Also word-of-mouth marketing is still effective nowadays.

One of the ideas to attract people to festivals in Latvia is to make a special festival package. For friendly prices, organized special transportation to and back the festival, increased the price for the ticket, special offers, if needed an accommodation. One of the survey questions was about ensured transportation and responses were more than positive. These kinds of packages would be more convenient for students as firstly is the price and then the comfort or both combined with a reasonable price.

Another thing which needs to be improved is the webpages of the festivals. By analysing them author concluded that information has to be readable, effective and should consist of all the necessary information before one can call themselves an international music festival. The responsible persons should be active on social media in order to keep the visitors intrigued.

More international and famous artists should be invited to festivals, nowadays DJ's are popular and their dance music attracts a lot of visitors.

In conclusion, a lot of work has to be done if organizers want to attract more Finnish or other international visitors. Firstly, the marketing - webpages should be improved, a translation into Finnish language and other languages could work, secondly a greater variety of artists that can compete with Finnish summer festivals.

Author was surprised that Finnish people do not know much about Latvia as a country itself. Both of the countries are located on the North of the Europe, the life-styles and cultures are similar, which could be a reason of lack of attractiveness and bigger interest to the South of Europe. Both, Finland and Latvia, should more market themselves to each other, as both can offer a wide cultural objects, activities and landscapes and are almost neighbouring countries.

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## Appendix

### Survey

Hello! My name is Kristīne Balode and I am writing my bachelor thesis about Latvia as a summer festival destination to Finnish tourists. The aim of the thesis is to find out if Latvia is known as a summer festival destination to Finnish tourists and how to market them towards the industry. I would be very happy if you could fill in a small questionnaire about festivals and your experience in them. It will take approximately 5-10 minutes. Thank you!

1. Have you ever been to a music festival?
2. Why do you attend a music festival?
3. Where do you usually look for the information about a festival?
4. Have you been in a music festival in Latvia?
5. If you have been in a music festival in Latvia – to which one and how was your experience?
6. What are the reasons and obstacles to attend a music festival in Latvia? (The lack of information, financial situation, the distance, etc.)
7. How do you think if the marketing is the problem for lack of information about festivals in Latvia? What else?
8. If there would be a transportation who takes you to and back to the festival, would you consider visiting a festival in Latvia?
9. What else would you consider for going to a festival in Latvia?
10. Latvia has many different good music festivals during the summer, but here are the 3 biggest and most popular festivals which you can visit next year:  
Positivus - <https://www.positivusfestival.com/en/>  
Summer Sound - <http://www.summersound.lv/en/main>  
Laba Daba - <http://www.labadaba.lv/eng/>